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*THE CENTENNIAL OF KANT'S "KRITIK."*

Professor Mears, of Hamilton College, has agitated the question of a formal celebration of the centennial of the publication of Kant's *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft*, as appears by the following circular. We are happy to add that his efforts have met with success. The 6th of July, 1881, at Saratoga, is fixed for the date of the meeting. We publish a full programme of the meeting in this number.

"DEAR SIR: I herewith inclose a copy of an article printed in the 'Penn Monthly' of December, 1880, to which I ask your attention. If the proposed celebration strikes you favorably, will you not signify your approval of it to the undersigned as early as possible? And if you are disposed personally to aid in the affair by being present and by reading a paper on some aspect of the subject, will you not communicate your intention at least by the 15th of April next?

"The time and place of meeting remain to be fixed, but the early summer would doubtless be the best time, and the place would probably be somewhere in New England or New York State. Your own opinion on the subject is respectfully solicited.

"JOHN W. MEARS.

"Next year (1881) will complete the century since this remarkable production was given to the world. It made an epoch in the history of philosophy, not only in Germany, but all over the thinking world. It revealed and vindicated the inherent power of the mind, and the independent activity of thought to a degree and in a manner never before attempted. The thoroughness, depth, and logical character of the author's investigations may be said to have introduced the rigorous method of science into metaphysics, and delivered it forever from the reproach of vagueness and dogmatism. All the thinking of centuries preceding seemed, in contrast to the "Kritik," to be shallow and purblind. All the thinking that has followed it has been amenable to a higher standard of judgment, and must render a stricter account of its attitude toward those fundamental conditions of knowledge of which Kant has shown that thought cannot legitimately rid itself. No one dare attempt to construct a system of philosophy today without reference to the work accomplished by Kant. He cannot be passed by a flank movement; his lines extend across the whole field; his positions must be met and fairly captured, or incorporated into and harmonized with the new principles of the proposed new system.

"What this wonderful speculative reformer accomplished for the thinking of Germany can only be learned by a survey of the progress and development of German philosophy during the century. The whole of that mighty movement has been the direct outgrowth of the "Kritik." And in these last days, after speculation has wandered widely and wildly from the original path, the countrymen of Kant are coming back to the soberer and solidier principles of the "Kritik."

"The thinking of Scotland has been immensely widened through the influence of Kant. In the greatest representative of the Scottish school, Sir William Hamilton, the Kantian spirit and tendency struggle constantly with the older and simpler tendency derived from Reid. Almost every thing in Hamilton which is stirring and stimulating, which widens the view, which is disciplinary and tonic, which is fresh and original, may

be called Kantian, either in its source or in its spirit. His school, if we may speak of such, is Scoto-German, just as Kant himself by extraction was.

"Dr. McCosh, in one of his recent writings, has proposed to the new generation of thinkers, especially in America, the problem of discrimination between the good and the bad in Kant. That there has been not a little to condemn in Kant (especially the *proton pseudos* of the "Kritik," that the primary principles of knowledge may possibly be true only for human minds), the writer would unhesitatingly admit. But the honored President of Princeton College appears disposed to recognize extremely little of good in Kant, and, perhaps, would discourage any considerable awakening of interest in the study of the "Kritik" in our American colleges.

"For our part, we believe the general American mind has arrived at a stage of thought and has attained a capacity of speculation where it can profitably occupy itself with the problems of the "Kritik." Nor will any one doubt that the national mind needs to be pinned down to close thinking, not only upon such topics, but needs also to acquire that habit of close thinking on all topics which will be cultivated best of all by the study of the "Kritik." Using the experience of a whole century, chiefly that of Germany, as a test of the good and bad in Kant, our youth, with little peril to important principles, can enjoy the incomparable advantages of the study of this great author. I cannot doubt that the "Kritik" itself ought to form part of the curriculum of the higher classes in every college; they ought not to be put off with lectures, criticisms, or scanty abstracts, but the author himself, with all his difficulties and in his own way of stating and deducting his principles, should be put into their hands in a faithful translation.

"The object of this paper is to propose to all interested in the study of the higher problems of philosophy in this country a *celebration of the centennial of Kant's "Kritik"* some time in the year 1881. It is believed that there are enough so interested to secure success, if not to give *éclat*, to such an occasion, provided their attention can be turned to the subject. There are thinkers among us competent to handle every aspect of the critical philosophy which would demand attention. Their essays and discussions would give an impulse to higher philosophical studies, and would elevate the standard of instruction in those branches. The celebration would help to establish or diffuse more widely among us those fundamental and impregnable principles of the spiritual philosophy which are so powerfully assailed by the materialistic tendencies of our time. It would help to concentrate, crystallize, and organize an American school, or, if not that, a recognized American sentiment favorable to the cultivation of exact thinking in pure metaphysics, parallel to the demand for exact calculation and experiment in natural science, vindicating and demonstrating the logical priority and superior comprehension and depth of the former to the latter.

"Such a centennial celebration might be made an adjunct to some of those regular educational gatherings which are held every summer. Possibly it might come off at Concord, but the movement would gain immensely in dignity and efficiency if it could be carried on independently of every other interest.

"While the work of the celebration ought to be substantially the presentation of the Kantian barrier to all the loose and materialistic thinking of our time, it ought not to exclude the opposition to Kant on metaphysical grounds. It would indeed be essential to such an occasion that the defects and errors of the "Kritik," and the wrong tendencies and great evils which grew out of it, either by misconception or exaggeration, or as legitimate results, of Kant's own teachings, should be fully exhibited. The purpose of the celebration should not be the indiscriminate eulogy of the famous

thinker, but the attainment, as nearly as possible, of a just estimate of his work. Thus guarded, there is no good reason to fear a recurrence of the long train of evil consequences which followed the original acceptance of the Kantian philosophy in Germany. The age and time would not admit of such a glaring anachronism.

"A few of the topics which might be profitably treated on such an occasion would be :

"1. The higher problems of philosophy.

"2. The utility of the study of Kant, its relations to the sensationalist and materialist schools of to-day.

"3. Kant and rationalism: evils and defects of his teachings.

"4. Kant and the Scottish schools. Is a return from Hamilton to Reid logically admissible?

"5. Fortunes of Kant in Great Britain and America.

"6. Revival of Kantian studies in Germany.

"7. Is Realism the teaching of the "Kritik?"

"8. Can the "Kritik" be fairly treated from the ground of Hegelianism?

"9. The interdependence of empirical and of metaphysical knowledge. The harmonizing of divergent tendencies of thought.

"10. The first and second editions of the "Kritik."

"11. Metaphysics as a science and metaphysics in the sciences.

"12. Is a return from Hegel to Kant logically admissible?

"13. Historical relations of the "Kritik," before and after. Under this topic an immense field is opened, which it would be useless to attempt to cover.

"14. A compendious statement of the main principles of the "Kritik," in the nature of an introduction to the study of the work itself.

"Many more suggestions might be added, as to topics to be discussed, as to the place of meeting, and as to the disposition of the valuable material which would then be accumulated. If published in a volume, it would not only form one of the best introductions to the study, but would be no unworthy monument to the hundredth anniversary of the appearance of the "Kritik."

"JOHN W. MEARS, D. D.,

"Albert Barnes" Department of Philosophy, Hamilton College, Clinton, N. Y."

#### PROGRAMME OF THE CENTENNIAL OF KANT'S "KRITIK."

It will be celebrated in the parlor of Temple Grove, in Saratoga, New York, on the 6th of July, 1881. The exercises, according to the following programme, will commence at nine o'clock A. M.:

I. The Lord's Prayer, Book of Common Prayer. II. Organization. III. Reading of Correspondence. IV. Opening Address, "Significance of the Centennial," Professor John W. Mears, D. D., Hamilton College. V. "The Higher Problems of Philosophy, Introductory to the Study of the 'Kritik,'" Professor George S. Morris, Johns Hopkins University. VI. "Can the 'Kritik' be fairly treated from the Ground of Hegelianism?" William T. Harris, LL. D., Editor of the "Journal of Speculative Philosophy." VII. "Kant's Distinction between the Speculative and the Practical Reason," President Bascom, Wisconsin University. VIII. "The Present Influence of Kant upon Philosophic Progress," Professor Josiah Royce, University of California. IX. "The Antimonies in the Light of Modern Science," Lester F. Ward, United States Geological Survey.

Papers are also expected from Messrs. Halstead and Burt, Fellows of Johns Hopkins

University, and others; while the presence and coöperation of President Porter, of Yale; President Anderson, of Rochester University; Professor North, of Hamilton College; Professor Torrey, of the University of Vermont; President Dodge, of Madison University; Mr. James M. Libbey, of the "Princeton Review;" Rev. Dr. Millard, of Syracuse; and many others, are confidently expected.

The New York State Teachers' Association, meeting in Saratoga, July 5th, 6th, and 7th, through their President, Professor Jerome Allen, of the State Normal School, Geneseo, offers to the recognized attendants upon the Kant Centennial the same privileges, "in all respects," as are enjoyed by themselves, in respect to railroad and steamboat fares and hotel accommodations. Your presence is cordially invited.

JOHN W. MEARS.

### KANT'S "CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON."

The following article, which appeared in the *Boston Advertiser*, from the pen of Mr. Edwin D. Mead (whose translation of *Hegel on Jacob Boehme* for this Journal will be remembered), is so appropriate to the time, and so full of interesting information, that we reprint it entire:

It is just a hundred years since the appearance of Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason," the most revolutionizing work in the whole history of modern thought. The centennial is being observed with great devotion in the scientific world of Germany, and will be appropriately recognized everywhere. The Concord School of Philosophy announces a special Kant week, and the reviews will all be stimulated to active discussion of the great thinker's varied work and influence. The "Critique of Pure Reason" is, of course, Kant's *magnum opus*, but it is only one of the three constituent parts of his philosophical system. It is quite impossible to understand Kant's purpose and significance without reading the "Critique of Practical Reason" and the "Critique of Judgment," especially the former. In the *Kant-Cyklus*, arranged for the last Semester by the Philosophical Society of the University of Leipzig, in commemoration of the centennial, the thesis maintained by one of the essayists was that the principal aim of the "Critique of Pure Reason" was the establishment of a moral theology. This conception, not a new one, to be sure, is not without very much reason. The "Critique of Practical Reason" is the exposition of this moral theology, and the most important ethical work altogether which has appeared in modern time, or, perhaps, in any time. It is the positive portion of Kant's system and the foundation of the philosophy of Fichte. Yet it is only within a year or two that this great work has become accessible to the English reader, through Mr. Abbott's careful translation. The "Critique of Judgment" has never yet been translated, though it is understood that a competent scholar is engaged in the work, and we may hope presently to have a fairly complete English edition of Kant's greater works. There are translations of the "Prolegomena," of the "Metaphysics of Ethics," and of the "Religion of Reason"—good translations, for the most part, but students do not seem to be so well aware of this as they should be. As to Kant's other works, so little is generally known that the complete list of his writings, which follows, will, it is hoped, be read just now with interest by many. The writer does not know of any such list in English. Kant's intellectual activity extended to almost every province, and in politics, æsthetics, and the natural sci-